

Distribution of *Centropus viridis* in the Babuyan Islands, northern Philippines

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Few ornithological collections have been made in the Babuyan Islands. Whitehead collected briefly on Fuga in 1895 while being waylaid en route to Cape Engaño, Luzon (Ogilvie Grant 1896). Mearns collected 30 specimens on 29–30 May 1907 (data from Mearns field notes on file at USNM) including two *Centropus*, a *C. viridis major* (USNM 201860) and a *C. bengalensis* (USNM 201872). The largest historic collections from these islands, made by McGregor (1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1910), were largely destroyed during the Second World War, except for a few specimens distributed to institutions outside the Philippines (Sibley 1946).

Parkes & Niles (1988) described *Centropus viridis major* from 5 specimens collected by Tomas and Jacinto Ramos on Fuga Island, Babuyan Island Group, north of Luzon. This taxon differs from *C. v. viridis*, found throughout most of the Philippine islands, by larger size and from *C. v. carpenteri* (endemic to Batan Island north of the Babuyan Island Group) and the smaller *C. v. mindorensis* (endemic to Mindoro Island west of central Luzon), by its chestnut wings.

Additional specimens of *C. v. major* collected by the faunal inventory program of the National Museum of the Philippines in collaboration with the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, in the northern Philippines provide new information on the distribution of this poorly known race in the Babuyan Islands.

In 1989 and 1990 we made ornithological collections on 4 of the 5 main Babuyan Islands (Camiguin Norte, Fuga, Dalupiri, and Calayan) and two small satellite islands west of Fuga (Maybag and Barit). Specimens of *Centropus viridis* from Camiguin Norte (1 ♀), Dalupiri (1 ♂, 1 ♀), and Calayan (1 ♂, 2 ♀) were measured using vernier calipers (bill length from the midsagittal frontal-nasal suture, determined by feel, to the bill tip) and a steel metal ruler (wing chord) and compared with material in the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, collection (USNM).

The 6 specimens agree with *C. v. viridis* in coloration being “dull black glossed with green, except for wings, which are bright chestnut” (duPont 1971). The specimen from Camiguin Norte, a female, is also similar in size to *C. v. viridis* with a wing chord of 162 and tail length of 245 mm versus female Luzon coucals where mean wing chord is 162.3 ± 5.57 ($n=12$) and mean tail length 252.1 ± 12.23 ($n=11$) (data from Table 1, Parkes & Niles 1988).

On the other hand, our specimens from Dalupiri and Calayan islands are larger than *C. v. viridis* with mean male wing chord 165 (range 163–168) and tail length 233 (range 223–244) ($n=2$), and mean female wing chord 179 (range 175–181) and tail length 269 (range 251–281) ($n=3$); and we feel referable to *C. v. major*. The size differences of these taxa are reflected in their weights (Table 1).

TABLE 1
Weights (g) of *Centropus viridis* from the northern Philippines

Island or Luzon Province	Sex	
	♂	♀
Pampanga Prov.	104	—
Cagayan Prov.	110, 126	142
Camiguin Norte	—	158
Dalupiri	169	223
Calayan	155	212, 219
Batan	145, 153	179, 200, 204, 209, 253

Our knowledge of the distribution and systematics of avian species in the northern Philippines is incomplete and hampered by the lack of adequate extant collections. Types of several taxa named by McGregor no longer exist, and without topotypic material racial affinities of some insular bird populations will remain obscured. Taxa endemic to one or two of these islands have been supposed to be widespread throughout the group. However, as seen from the distribution of *C. viridis*, this supposition may be in error and additional collections are warranted.

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